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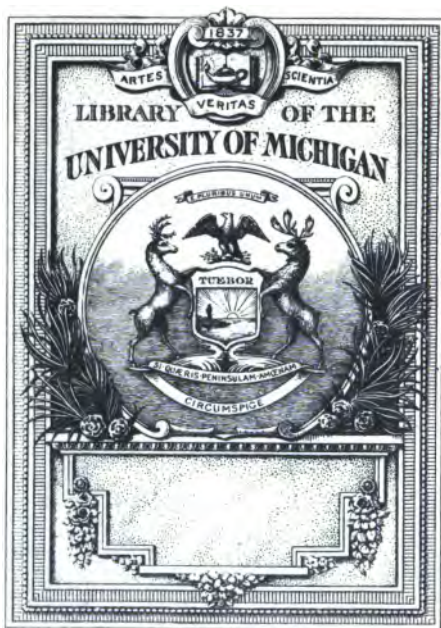
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For Review

IS ANY SICK AMONG YOU

Being a Manual of Counsel, Instruction and Preparation
for Receiving the Ministry of Healing, in Holy
Unction, or the Laying on of Hands, based
on over twenty-one years Priestly
experience of such Ministering

By P. GAVAN DUFFY
Priest - Superior S. D. C.

*Silver and gold have I none, but such
as I have give I thee. Acts iii: 6*

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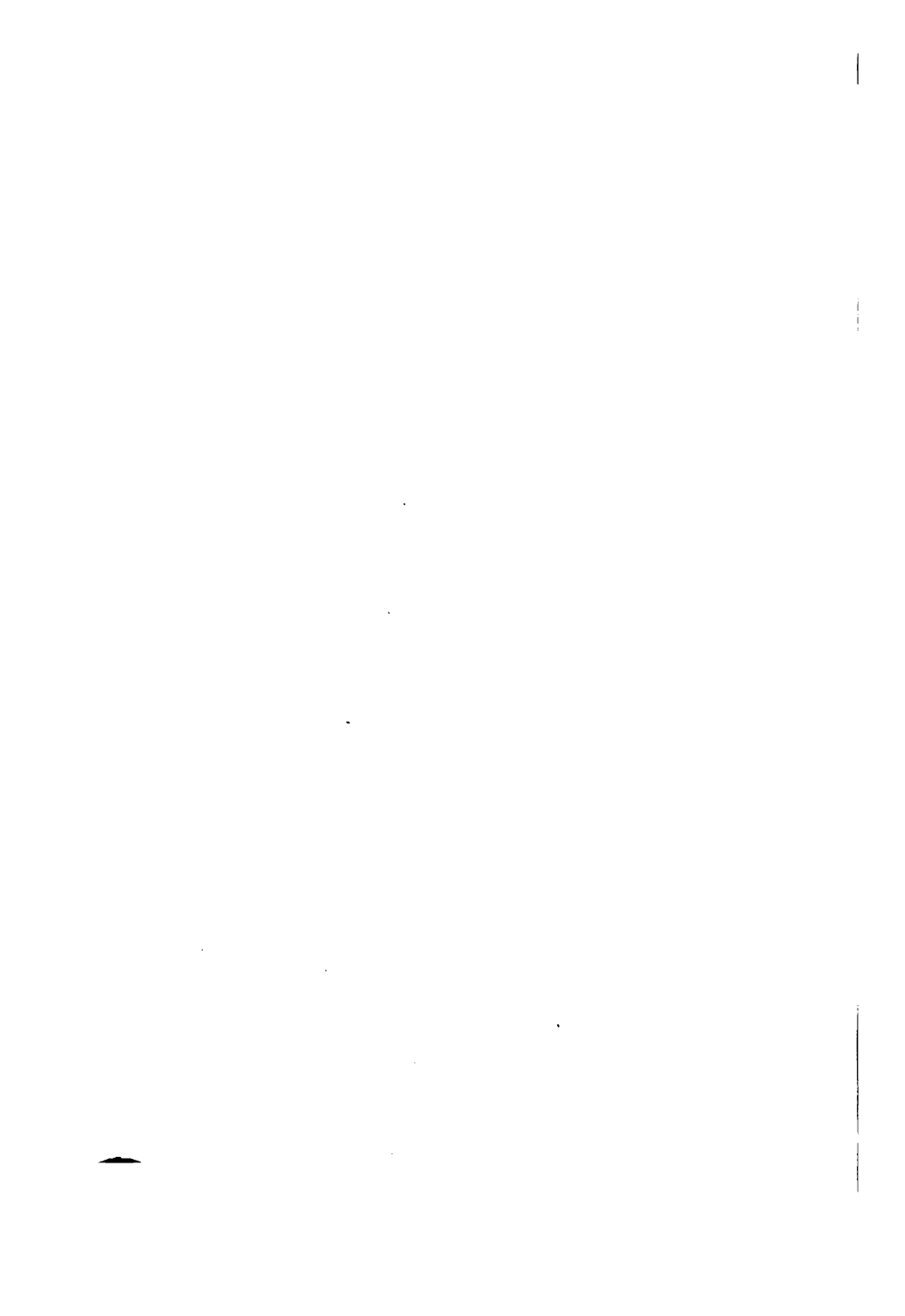
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By P. GAVAN DUFFY, S.D.C.

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TO THE GLORY OF GOD
and in affectionate remem-
brance of those to whom He
gave health and blessing
when deigning to use me as
His instrument in minister-
ing to them.—P. G. D.

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IS ANY SICK AMONG YOU

CHAPTER I

BEING INTRODUCTORY

OVER twenty-one years ago I was called to anoint an epileptic. (My reason for writing in the first person will be apparent later.) I had long believed in the unchangeableness of God's will to banish disease from the body, as well as to destroy sin in the soul, and this belief became quite clearly defined when I was still but little more than a child. Naturally, when I was ordained a priest, I taught what I believed, and within a year or two of my ordination, when ministering in a great city where I was a stranger, the request came to me, both forcefully and suddenly. I felt at the time that God was calling me, there and then, to practice what I had taught; I anointed the epileptic and his fits ceased from that hour. Since then I have ministered in many places, on both sides of the Atlantic, and given Holy Unction for bodily restoration to many people, suffering with divers diseases. In a number of other cases I have laid hands on the sick, in the Name of Jesus, and have seen them made whole, through the Divine goodness responding to the cry of faith. I have known epileptics to be restored, the lame to walk, the deaf made to hear, fevers suddenly to leave, and nervous ills to be banished. I have seen recovery brought in cases of

infantile paralysis, angina pectoris, pernicious erysipelas, paralysis and other illnesses of many kinds. In all of these cases, with very few exceptions, medical men had abandoned hope; in a number of instances I have worked hand in hand with the doctor (always a delight), and, in some cases, men eminent in the medical profession, though making little or no religious profession, have asked me to minister to their patients, where medical science was baffled, or have directed the patient to get in touch with me. Not all the people I have ministered to have recovered, but where the spiritual ministry has failed I am convinced that the cause lay in only one thing: lack of faith to take hold of the gift of healing, which I believe is unfailingly given; and the number of failures has been, comparatively, very small.

I mention these facts now for several reasons. Recently, in the Church, there has been much-to-do about spiritual healing. An impression has been conveyed that it is something quite new among us, or an old practice revived only in very recent years by a few who, through much use of the printing press and sensational newspapers, have brought to light a disused and forgotten power that belongs to the spiritual treasury of the Church. Healers have been exploited by clergy who hoped to fill up the pews of their churches, emptied by the woeful lack of spirituality, by some new sensation. There has been much sounding of trumpets and, probably, seeking of notoriety. Possibly, also, guileless men,

who have had, seemingly, no knowledge of the fact that the sensational American newspaper first looks for a "story," not troubling very much about the facts, have unintentionally contributed to the excitement; sick people have thronged to churches on the strength of a mere "wish" or a more or less forlorn hope, that they might obtain benefit, and they have returned to their homes sick, because their uninstructed minds looked for magic instead of an effect of which faith alone could be the cause; with the result that all hope has been killed. That which should have been worked silently has been dragged out into scenes of morbid excitement and such disproportionate emphasis has been placed on bodily healing as to threaten to make it in many minds the sum of the Christian Religion. It is not surprising, under such circumstances, when we seem to be threatened with a new Cult within the Church, that men devoid of any sense of the mystical, and ruled only by a sort of cold legalistic reason, should bring their pens into use for the purpose of opposing the much to be desired restoration to the Prayer Book of an Office for the anointing of the sick, together with the wide use of it.

I have thought, therefore, that in putting forth this little Manual, one of the purposes that might be served would be the helping to correct the false idea of "newness" in the use of the means of spiritual healing. If I have been practicing it quietly, for nearly twenty-two years in priestly ministration, I feel there must be others among the clergy who


have been doing the same thing, possibly for twice that length of time, but with too holy a regard for the wonders they have seen manifested to trumpet them abroad. We often read, after a cure wrought by our Lord, that "He charged them they should tell no man." There must have been highly important reasons for this, some of which we can well imagine. One that I fear we do not think enough about is this: It is not what we *tell* with our tongues and lips, for generally that is consciously or unconsciously exaggerated, but what our *healed* bodies *silently declare*, that furthers the glory of God and helps the faithful. In the second place, I felt it might help to show the seriously inclined, what I believe to be the truth, that the *greatest* mercies of God in bodily healing, where faith is in evidence to claim its own, are wrought far from scenes of excitement and mere emotionalism, and not just out of knowledge gained only from textbooks. Faith is not a matter of the intellect, but first of the heart (that is, true faith, that which *achieves* and *creates*, not mere dogmatic definition), and it is in the silent sanctuary of the soul that Divine truth is taught to the seeker by the indwelling Guest. In the third place, I write in response to many requests, covering a number of years, and because desirous of having some little manual of instruction which, by God's blessing, may help to clear up some of the difficulties that divide the mind and are fatal to results. There is nothing controversial here, simply a telling out of what has

been learned in a more than average experience. There are many who write books about healing, some assailing the claim, others maintaining it, but the point of view is generally the abstract.

Again, it not infrequently happens in some of the Teaching Missions, which our Society gives in all parts of the country, that, if the people's expectation has been quickened, there is a "confirming of the word with signs following." A subsequent visit to such a parish, frequently means that one is beset by many people, wishing to indulge what they feel only as a forlorn hope or a mere wish, asking spiritual ministration for cure of bodily ill. To attempt to respond to such requests, where people are as ignorant of the meaning and power of faith as average Christians of today, without first instructing and carefully preparing them, would be to do an incalculable mischief, robbing them, probably, of their last hope and inviting that advertising for oneself which is only to be deplored. My unusually busy life makes impossible the giving of time for proper instruction. Hence the printing of this little **Manual**, based on my experience, and written in the simplest words, to place, as a first step, in the hands of those who are willing to *reflect*, to avoid *haste*, and to learn that the meaning of faith lies *not* in wishing, but in *willing*. Above all, I desire to emphasize the importance of keeping "the proportion of the faith." In the past, by gross neglect of Holy Uction, that arose out of faithlessness, there has been an evident disproportion. We must

now take care that in an over-exalting of the place of bodily healing, we fall not into a more destructive disproportion.

That the injunction our Lord gave to His Church nineteen centuries ago is as true today as then, I cannot, I *dare* not (after what I have seen) doubt. St. James gives us an account of the Apostolic practice; Tertullian seems certainly to have believed that the same practice and power were part of the Church's possession at the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries, and Eusebius quotes St. Irenaeus (second century) as unmistakably persuaded of the power of the Church in his day, through faith and prayer, not only to heal the sick, but to call back life to the dead; to which Eusebius himself, in the fourth century, adds like testimony. Our Lord promised that "signs and wonders," among them the raising of the sick, should follow the preaching of the word, and in every century since, where true faith has been manifested, and dared to venture and to *do*, Christ's promise, I believe, has never failed. We have a right to look for those signs today and they can be found. The outside always corresponds with the inside, and where we find the Church simply boasting of her powers in the past, unable to demonstrate them in the present, the reason is to be sought within: it is lack of faith. Quite clearly, the only explanation of Christianity, the most paradoxical of things, is to be found in its *doing*; and the things of faith (real, achieving faith, not mere dogma) still outside our experience, alone



can come within it as we not only receive the prescription of Christ, but follow it. This applies to every phase of faith: it is the door which opens out from the prison house of materialism and mammon, in which the Church has been miserably lodging, to the freedom that truth makes for God's children, the brightness of the wondrous Kingdom of Heaven on earth, with its beauties, now hidden to most of us with blinded eyes, and the company of the saints and angels. One step, and it is only one step (there are others more important) in the right direction is the recovery of the use of the Means of Health for the body. To this end, I set forth this little Manual, all too incomplete, of course, though I hope covering the essentials, invoking the Divine blessing upon it and its readers.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TO DISEASE

BECAUSE of the purpose in view in this little manual, stated in what already has been said by way of introduction, and which I hope you have read, I intend writing just as if I was speaking to you or instructing one who came to learn of God's goodness in His attitude toward us in bodily ills. So will you not try and imagine me sitting beside you and talking to you out of what light God has given to me, as well as out of a long experience as a priest in ministering to the sick? And this has been so rich a one that, recalling the wonders my eyes have beheld, through the great goodness of God, I can in some small but real measure make these words mine: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you."

You know, we all value good advice when sickness befalls, especially when the one stricken is very near and dear to us. At such times, so concerned are we and so anxious to take in all that will increase our hopes, that we listen to almost anyone who has some remedy to tell of, though, fortunately, we do not always follow out what good intentions may suggest. But we hang upon the verdict of the doctor and with anxious eyes watch his face and fear the shake of the head that may tell of but little, if any, prospect of recovery. Well, is it not a pity that we so rarely seek the best of all advice, that which is given to us in Holy Scrip-

ture? One marvels when one hears people speaking of the Bible as the Word of God and yet paying such little heed to its plain declarations and directions.

Now if you read the fifth chapter of the Epistle of St. James, there you will find explicit instructions in case of illness: "Is any sick among you?" In that case let him "call for the elders (or priests, as the word means) of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up."* Unfortunately, there are very few of us who believe this, or we would practice it more, but the wisdom of the course remains just the same. St. James is telling us in his epistle, or letter, just what the practice of the Church was in his time, and this continued for centuries after Christ. We must not suppose from this that the Church made light of the physician, like the followers of Mrs. Eddy. On the contrary, always the Church has taught us to respect the physician. He is an instrument of God just as the priest is, but it very commonly happens that medical science is baffled, and we know that the doctor cannot go further than his remedies. His limitations are thus very clearly marked. Are we then to despair when he assures us that he can do no more? Are we to reconcile ourselves or our loved ones to death or prolonged suffering, such as paralysis or epilepsy, or other ills that disable, but do not kill? No, indeed! That is part of the "good news" of the

* St. James v:14-15.

Gospel. God does not care simply for the health of the soul, but also for the health of the body and the mind, for, of course, we cannot make a full spiritual effort unless the body is well, as the soul. (You must remember that God made the body to be at ease and illness is rightly termed dis-ease.) And you will find it not uncommon among doctors, particularly among those most eminent in the medical profession, to advise you to send for a priest; especially at such times when they feel they can do no more; they say: "Now we must leave it with God."

"But," you may say, perhaps, "supposing it is God's will that the sick one should die? It may be, also, that to live disabled is a penance He is imposing for past offenses." Well, we shall speak more fully of this in the next chapter when we discuss the Will of God in relation to physical disease. But it will be well to consider two or three things at this stage, before we go on to that, which may help to clear up this objection in your mind. In the first place, in such a consideration as this, you must use your intelligence as well as make an effort to develop your faith. We are taught that we must love God with all our *mind*, as well as with all our heart and soul, and I fear the great majority of modern Christians forget that. God does not ask blind obedience from us; His love is so great that again and again we find Him reasoning with men. For example: "Come now, let us *reason* together." And our Lord: "*Consider* the ravens. * * * *Consider* the lilies *how* they grow." He wants you to

think out things and there is nothing He would condemn more than the attitude of those who look to find a short cut to His blessings by ignoring thought. You remember how He checked the rich young ruler: "*Why* callest thou Me good?" And His words to His disciples: "*Whom* say ye that I am?" "*Whence* shall we buy bread that these may eat?" You see, always He is making His disciples think, use their reasoning faculties. Now He has allotted to man a certain span of life and His Will is that life should be *lived out*. I want you to recall that all those He called back from the dead were *young people* who had not lived out their fullness of years, and in that very fact we may well see His protest against premature death. In the second place, you must dismiss from your mind the ascetic idea that God punishes moral ill in us by sending physical ill upon us. That is not a Christian thought or idea, being first imported into Judaism from heathenism and then into Christianity from Judaism. Moreover, it bears marks of unthinking; the ascetic, who has done so much to destroy the joy of religion, invariably thinks along the line of least resistance and puts before us a theory that is plausible but which will not stand searching investigation. The only wonder is that we have been content to receive his poor traditions unquestioningly for so long a time, and it is worthy of note that the protest against the ascetic today comes from men who have drunk deeply of the cup of sorrow. But we are left in no doubt as to what our

right mental and spiritual attitude should be. Our Lord lays the injunction upon us all, sinners varying in degree only and not in kind, that we must *return good for evil*. Now, manifestly, it would be absurd to suppose that He sets us to practice a higher ethical law than God Himself observes! The *reason* Christ enjoined us to return good for evil is because that is what God does Himself. "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." We can, then, safely dismiss all doubt from our minds as to God's relation to us in illness.

In the third place (this also covers our second consideration), He makes it quite clear that it is not His Will that we should live on disabled, and in one striking evidence of this He gives a guarantee of the great fact of absolution. You will remember the case of the man sick of the palsy, let down through the roof to the feet of Jesus. This is a most interesting case because we have in this man one where physical and moral ill meet. His physical incapacity was due directly to his sin, for our Lord says: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." And when He perceived that the envious and hostile around Him, in their hearts, were accusing Him of blasphemy, He said to them: "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?" Now, of course, from the point of view of His enemies, it was easier to *say* the former, though by far the greater claim, since they could have no proof of the man's forgiveness until

after death. Desiring an immediate test of His powers, and hoping He would fail, they thought within their hearts that the lesser claim, viz., to cure the body, would be the greater and harder thing to say, because the spoken word must be followed by instant results, manifest before their eyes. Our Lord, knowing their hearts, at once said, "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith He to the sick of the palsy), "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." And he did so.

Now I want you to mark this: He gave the second command, where the first would have healed both soul and body, because, knowing the deceitfulness and doubt of the human heart, He evidently desired to give to the penitent, for all time, the *assurance* that, in the accomplishing of physical restoration at the direct word, there was the mark of His covenant that every absolution pronounced on earth by His priests to the truly penitent was *just as real a fact as the bodily cure*. This ought to bring great comfort and new confirming light to those who are in the habit of seeking priestly absolution—if only the sick in body *were* raised up! Ah, that is the sad regret, is it not, that we have the Church declaring positively (probably no other branch of the Catholic Church does so as definitely as our own) that she has the divinely committed power to absolve, and yet standing paralyzed before the scourge of disease, such as the last plague (likely to recur in succeeding years for some time)

which we called the Spanish Influenza? For at once we see the inconsistency of claiming the *greater* power whilst being unable to exercise the *lesser*. For it is a far more wonderful, much more stupendous thing, to claim the power to heal a soul than to heal a body, and it is only as we restore faith once more in its fullness, applying it to the body and mind as well as to the soul, that we reasonably can expect to see the general revival, based on unshakeable belief, of seeking absolution. If people saw the Church exercising her powers to raise the sick, especially in times of epidemic when hundreds of thousands are cut off and go down early into the grave, it is only reasonable to suppose that they would trust her in the affairs of the soul. Indeed, in one very real sense, we may regard the healing of the body as the outward visible sign of her power to heal the soul.

Well, perhaps God has chosen *you* to be an instrument to help bring about the conditions of faith that should prevail. If you are ill in body yourself, a shut-in who has lost hope, or the relative or friend of such a one, then I bid you *hope!* God is unchanging; His words are unchanging; His ways are unchanging. The coming of Christ in the flesh was that He might war upon all that afflicted the bodies and minds, as well as the souls of men. If He gave authority to absolve to His Church, He just as emphatically and unqualifiedly gave power to heal the body and to cast out ills from the mind. Don't doubt this. Remember

He has said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away." To doubt after that is to do Him gross dishonour, and you must throw aside the thought of the past, with which men of ascetic mind and temperament have encumbered you, and not only "receive with meekness the engrafted word," but take such action as shall show and declare before men your belief in it. So I suggest, before you go on to the next chapter, that you pause and meditate upon some of the things I have tried to make clear to you; and then pray earnestly to the Holy Spirit to bring you light and to fulfill our Lord's promise, as of course He will, viz., "He shall take of Mine and show it unto you."

CHAPTER III

GOD'S WILL IN RELATION TO BODILY ILLS

NOW let us think about God's Will in relation to physical disease. If you are like most Christians I have instructed concerning healing, you are experiencing a great difficulty in the making up of your mind as to whether it is His Will that you should be restored to health; and you want to do His Will. Unfortunately, the ascetic has dominated Christian dogma for so long a time that he has succeeded in colouring even the language of the Prayer Book with his own peculiar thought. Thus we have been taught that illness is "God's visitation," His chastisement for our sins, which we must patiently endure, knowing that what seems grievous now will eventually work out to our great spiritual advantage. And struggle as we may to escape from such a view, we are oppressed and held back by the psychic weight of past thought as well as the present. Yet, the first essential step for those seeking spiritual ministrations for bodily healing is the positive making up of the mind that God's Will is to banish disease. That is at once the first, possibly hardest, and most essential thing we must do, for our Lord has taught us that a divided mind is sure to invite failure.

You must begin, then, by struggling hard to rid your mind of the poor traditions of the past. As I tried to show you in the last chapter, God does *not* return ill for evil done, but, as our Saviour Himself

told us, "He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil."* And, of course, physical ill could not come from God, who is Goodness Itself. When Christ said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit," He was not merely providing us with a test of good values among men, but describing what is true of God. Being God, He cannot reverse Himself. St. James, by inference, brings out the same truth when he asks: "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" No; whilst it is true to say that illness is the result of sin (not necessarily the sin of the one who is ill, by any means), it is not God's infliction, but the wage of sin itself. We need to think more clearly on these few words, so often misapplied by pious people: "The wages of *sin* (not of *God*) is death." Now our Lord was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and whether these be in the soul, the body, or the mind, he wars relentlessly upon them. Were the position of the ascetic a right one, and sickness a chastisement that was to work to our great advantage, then, obviously, it would be utterly wrong to pray for its removal, and instead of supporting hospitals we should do our utmost to close them, since their works for the alleviation of suffering were an interference with the wise chastisements and remedies of God. But the ascetic has never been very consistent in his reasoning, just as he is never more cruel than when he endeavors to trace all illness directly to sin in the individual afflicted. It is true that many receive the wage sin pays, because of their

* St. Luke vi:35.

misdoings, but it is equally true to say that many more are ill quite apart from their own personal failings. Else what shall we say when we visit a hospital for sick children and babies! The sinless Sacrifice of the Cross, one would think had, once for all, put an end to any such cruel imputation as that referred to.

Our attitude, then, should be that we understand God as permitting physical ill without *willing* it—a totally different thing. Parents permit their children to run risks of broken limbs, and even death, when they see to it that they go into the playgrounds to engage in games that ordinarily are health-giving. The desire is to build up healthy men and women, and the end in view is so great a one that they willingly take for them the risk of injury. But, manifestly, that is a very different thing to taking their children aside and maiming them themselves. Such a course would elicit only horror and indignation from all right-minded people and we should demand that parents, or guardians, so inhuman, should be sent to prison and punished severely. And yet there are, otherwise sane-thinking, people who suppose that God does just such things! No; God does not will disease; on the contrary, His Will is unalterably opposed to it, and though it be permitted, because He will not coerce wills that He has made free, He is gradually but surely destroying it. Do you know that four hundred years ago the average length of life was only thirty years, and that two hundred years ago three-quarters of the children born died

soon after birth, where three-quarters of them live today? And the more we learn to cooperate with God, especially in the neglected life of faith, the quicker we shall triumph over disease.

Here, perhaps, you say to me: "Yes, that all sounds reasonable enough and I should like to believe it; but how can I be positive? You say this, and some others may, but there are many more who declare the contrary. Why should I believe one school of thought more than another?" Well, you do quite right to raise the question, for, unfortunately, it is the clash of the two ideas that chiefly contributes to keeping so many minds divided. I might, of course, remind you that the Church has lately taken steps to expunge from the Prayer Book language that uncompromisingly attributes the authorship of disease to God. Happily, we are correcting that dishonour done to Him (not wittingly done, but unthinkingly), and returning to the concepts of primitive Christianity and prayers more like unto those of the early Church which were free from this dolefulness. And I do not want you to accept *my* point of view, my opinion, for if I had that only to offer it would not be worth while taking up your time or mine, let alone raising your hopes. What I have been telling you, as to God's attitude to bodily ills, is not my opinion, but what God Himself reveals. How? Through His blessed Son, our Lord Jesus. He is the climax of revelation. He it is Who reveals to us the Father. And that is what we want, do we not? Secretly there is within so

many of us a fear of the Father; a feeling, ill-defined, but none the less conscious, that whilst we are touched with the mercy and love of the Son and the gracious gentleness of the Holy Spirit, the Father may be different—cold, stern Justice, a great Disciplinarian. It is not altogether improbable that even St. Philip may have had some such thoughts when he gave utterance to what we often may feel keenly within ourselves: "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Well, don't you remember the answer, the reply that ought to drive away every fear and fill our hearts with a great depth of love for God the Father? For he said: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father . . . the words that I speak unto you I speak not from Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."* What works? Why, those very works of healing souls and sick bodies and minds.

Thus, when we desire to know what the Will of the Father is, we seek it in the actions of the Son. Again and again He tells us that He came not to do His own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Him, so that in all our Lord did we see the Father's Will acted out before us. Hence the Gospel portrait of Jesus Christ alone declares unto us the character of God, and by character we mean chiefly the fixity of the will. Thus God's character, God's Will is unchanging; so that when we reflect that in every instance of those who sought bodily restoration our Lord, *without one single exception*, healed them, we must believe that the attitude of God is the same

* St. John xiv:9.

today as of old. Had there been one instance of a case where He had refused restoration, when besought, then, perhaps, it might have been said, as some would have us vainly believe today, that His works of mercy were simply the bounty a great King was distributing when visiting His earth. But He cured all who sought; and when you grasp that fact and remember, as we are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that He is "the same yesterday, today and forever," the last vestige of doubt as to the goodness of God's Will to heal the sick in body, as well as the sick in soul, should be driven from your mind. Of course we must not expect that the old shall be made physically young; but if the allotted span has not been spent we have a right to claim God's gift of health; and, even though it be passed, if it be His Will that we should continue here for a time longer, it is equally His Will that we should do so in good health. Personally I have ministered to people who were in some cases over eighty years of age, who had been disabled, and who by God's goodness were restored.

As bringing out this purpose of God's Will, I strongly recommend you to read over carefully and to meditate upon the Holy Gospel for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany, as given in your Prayer Book. Here we meet the very question we have been considering: there is the story of the Centurion coming to Christ asking for healing for his servant, with a faith so great as to give joy to our Lord. And immediately before, we have the account of

the leper coming into His presence with the cry upon his lips: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Now if you will put a little emphasis on the words "wilt" and "canst" you will find a fund of meaning. For here are two men coming to ask the Divine mercy; one an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, the other a man instructed in the Jewish religion, a believer in revealed religion as interpreted by the Jewish Church. What is the difference in their mental and spiritual attitude to Christ? Just this, in one thing they were agreed: they both recognized He had the *power* to heal, but—and here they differed widely—the Jew doubted His *will* to cure him. This, of course, was the result of the ascetic teaching he had received. He approached Christ (like most Christians today) in the spirit of one who says, "I know you *can* heal me, but I am not sure that you *will*. You may deem it better for my soul's sake that I should bear this leprosy as a penance for my sin—Lord, *if* Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Well, the reply came at once, the reply for *all time*, "I *will*, be thou clean." And he was healed.

Now, if you have seen your own wavering faith and fear and doubt in the leper, I beg you to put it aside and confidently claim the all that Christ so freely offers. I bid you remember that His Will, like Himself, is unchanging: "the same yesterday, today and forever." You know He has the power to heal you; don't doubt the goodness of His unchanging Will to do so. Rid yourself of a divided mind

that alone shuts you out from being able to receive that which He so graciously offers. Throw aside all the unbelief and misbelief regarding that Will, which you have inherited, probably, in poor traditions, or have been taught to believe under ascetic teachers. (There was a time, you know, when unwashed and vermin covered bodies were thought to be a mark of great sanctity by men of that peculiar religious temperament. And you don't advocate that!) And do not fall into the common error that grows out of a doubting mind as to God's Will, that you must persist in prayer for the purpose of changing that Will, in your much importunity, for the Will of God is *eternally fixed* for the welfare and well-being of your soul and your body. The end of all true prayer and spiritual effort is not the changing of His Will, to bring it to the level of our necessities, but to raise your own poor wavering will to His, to bring it into union with His Will. When that is done, and it requires great effort and perseverance on your part, then health is yours, for in that very act of union the things of God are made available for the children of men.

CHAPTER IV

FAITH—THE CONDITIONS WE MUST SATISFY

WE have been thinking about the unchangeableness of God's Will in relation to bodily ills. I hope that what has been said has sunk deep into your mind for it is useless to approach Holy Unction, or to seek the laying on of hands for recovery, unless you have formed a right estimate of God's character and really loving disposition. I so often find that this is a very difficult thing for most people to do, but you must struggle with the old fears and old doubts and conquer them, remembering, as St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy, the encouraging words: "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself."*

Now we must go on to consider the conditions we must endeavour to fill in order to obtain God's great mercies. First, there must be an act of volition leading us to seek and to ask Him for healing, with a willingness to try and conquer all prejudices that might keep us from using the means He ordained. Remember that there were large numbers of sick people in the cities and villages our Lord visited, who remained sick because they sought not His healing touch. Christ will never force Himself upon us, nor reveal Himself to the self-satisfied. It was with them, as with many of us today, they "had not because they asked not," to quote the words of St. James. It was only those who came *seeking* and

* II Timothy ii:13.

asking whom our Lord made whole, or those for whom faithful friends came interceding.

So, above all things, we must have faith, and the first mark of faith's exercise is the confident asking of God for those things our Saviour has taught us He will surely give: the supply of the needs of the body as well as the soul. Now faith is not an easy thing to gain; it requires great effort on our part, constant struggle with fears and doubts, which in the case of the sick or disabled so frequently arise out of the physical senses. Unhappily, most of us have but little realization of what faith really is, and for a long time now the religious world generally has been content to interpret it in just terms of belief. That, of course, is a part of faith, but only a part, and a small part at that. So often belief is merely of the head and not of the heart and there is no saving virtue in just belief; we are told that even "the devils believe and tremble," which latter is more than most of our eleven o'clock congregations do. Again, there are many who have a notion that faith consists in constantly *wishing* a thing to come to pass, and numbers, who are groping blindly for that faith which achieves, fall into this error. Whereas, of course, it is far more than wishing; it is *willing*. God has given a free will to us all and one of the great purposes of the will in action is the *making* and not the mere recording of experience. So I want you to think of faith as the gift of God within us which we must stir up and *use* in order to develop it. It is a power, a creative force, that is

able to call things into being; as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it: "Faith is the giving substance to the things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." And you may recall the lines of the poet, Hartley Coleridge:

Think not the Faith by which the just shall live
Is a dead creed, a map correct of Heaven,
Far less a feeling fond and fugitive,
A thoughtless gift, withdrawn as soon as given;
It is an affirmation and an act
That bids Eternal Truth be Present Fact.

Now there are two almost lost elements of faith that you must strive to recover, if it is to be made to you the power it ever has been, when rightly understood: Expectation and Venture. And by expectation I do not mean just hope, but that which is part of faith itself; we hope for what may be possible, but we expect what *must* be possible. Do you see the difference? Faith's expectancy is based on *grounds*, where hope is not necessarily so based. If you will make a point (I strongly urge you to) of reading over, carefully and prayerfully, the cases of great faith that delighted our Lord, and the many cures He wrought, as we have them in the Gospel, you will see how He always looks for and develops that faculty, calling it forth from its slumber. In the former cases, we have expectation, utterly excluding doubt as to successful results, in such instances as the Centurion asking healing for his servant, the Syro-Phoenician woman beseeching for

her daughter, the woman who touched the hem of His garment; and in the cases where expectation was not in evidence we see our Lord awakening it by commands which it then leaped out to obey. The trouble with so many of us is that we ask without expecting, and so prayer and spiritual effort constantly fail because so woefully incomplete. Hence you must school yourself to the point of expecting with that expectancy that shuts out doubt or fear of failure and shows unshakeable confidence. Unless you can make some headway in bringing yourself, through Sacrament, prayer and other effort, to that point, I strongly advise you to put off seeking spiritual ministration for the relief of your bodily ill until you have made some real progress along this line. Otherwise you will simply end in "wishing" for what you should *will*. And you *can* win and increase expectancy; the one path that leads to it is desire, and when you have begun to desire it you have begun to expect. This is important for you to reflect upon because you will remember that although our Lord willed to do great works in Nazareth, the people's unbelief defeated His purpose—they expected nothing. "And He did not many works there because of their unbelief."*

Secondly, you must have the spirit of *venture*. That is, you must be prepared to *act out* your expectation, to attempt the seeming impossible. Both expectation and venture, as the living and achieving elements in faith, are especially made clear to us in the case of the woman with the issue of blood.

* St. Matthew xiii:58.



You recall the story, do you not? Our Lord was on His way to the house of Jairus and a great crowd of curious people were following and surging around Him. Near by was this woman, who had been afflicted for twelve years, and her expectancy is both great and well defined: "For she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." Then venturing, she made her way, with many difficulties we may be sure, for she was no doubt frail and wasted, through the throng and touching the hem of His garment found *exactly the result she had expected*—she was made whole. There were numbers of others in that crowd who touched Christ, swaying against Him as they moved on, but her touch was the only one He felt; it was the touch of faith, and He turning to her said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." So, you see, faith and wonder are simply the *law of cause and effect*. Our Saviour does not attempt to conceal this. Again and again He uses the same, or almost identical terms, such as: "Be it unto thee even as thou *wilt*" (the will again you note); "According to your *faith* be it unto you." And in the case of the sick of the palsy, where men of real expectation acted for their friend, letting him down through the roof, allowing nothing to hinder their venture, at once our Lord is attracted by them and their actions; we read: "Jesus *seeing* their faith," restored the sufferer. (I am italicizing those words of the sacred text which I want you specially to ponder, all through this Manual.)

So we might go on, taking case after case, but I

have said enough, I think, to show you that in all real faith, upon which our Lord has conditioned His mercies, there are to be seen clear evidences of these elements which are conspicuous by their absence from faith of today. These you must earnestly seek to recover, and I cannot see how you can possess them unless you are quite clear in your mind that the Will of God is that we should be well in body as He wills us to be in soul. But don't feel discouraged if in your efforts to develop expectancy you fall short of what you desire. If you are ill at the time you read this, or have it read to you, of course it is much more difficult to make the effort than is the case in health. Do your utmost, fill up the measure of your present capacity, and God in His mercy will do the rest. Or, if you are well now, when reading, so much the better, for you can the more readily strive for spiritual development and not only be armed to meet illness when it threatens, but you will have found, by God's blessing, new visions opened to you, telling of wondrous possibilities in the life of faith. For, it need scarcely be said, faith is not simply to be viewed in its relation to the cure of bodily ills, but grasped in all its achieving aspects and related to every phase of life, so that your religious concepts are not only unspeakably enlarged, but you find revolution accomplished within you. Or, again, if you happen to be one who has been disabled these many years, with hope practically gone, so far as recovery is concerned, I bid you reach out after it once more and regain it with

new meaning and power. It is not an easy matter, but it is possible; only you must *will* to recover hope, *will* to expect, *will* to venture, even when the physical senses seem to give sharp contradiction to the prospect of cure.

Do not be surprised at this latter, nor let it depress you. Depression will soon pass when you reflect that one of the attractions and glories in Christ's call to us in faith is the ever attempting what is called the impossible, manifesting achievement before the eyes of men. How impossible, for instance, it must have seemed, in the first moment, for the man with the helpless hand to respond to our Lord's command: "Stretch forth thy hand." Why, that was the very thing that he had known for so long was impossible. And the poor sufferer, unable, perhaps, to brush a fly from his face, who was told to arise and walk—how outside the bounds of reason it all seemed! But attempting, venturing in faith, the expectation quickened until the afflicted were one with God's Will and purpose, they both obeyed the command and were healed. Of course you may say it was different for them as they beheld Christ and had Him present bodily with them. Very true; but then we have Christ with us and in the fact that He pronounced a special benediction on those who not having seen yet believed, I think, if we seek for it, we shall find that He has provided for us all that would compensate for the lack of being able to look into His eyes when He was in the flesh. In one sense He is more wondrously present today, for He

is now *universally* present, to be found within all who open unto Him. And He has said, remember, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do."* Now there is one thing we can be *quite* positive about; our Lord came not to mock us. *He meant exactly what he said.*

So you must throw off all depression and escape from any hopelessness you may have been experiencing, most likely as the result of teaching with the ascetic tinge and colouring. We have allowed the ascetic to supplant hope with resignation. This should not be, and instead of wailing out, "Thy Will be done," as a cry of despair, or in an effort, that deceives no honest mind, to pass off as a voluntary virtue of resignation what you feel there is no possible escape from, use it as the cry of great faith and hope it is. Each time we say the Lord's Prayer we use these words and we do so because they are based on the recognition of the fact that in possessing a free-will we are not *compelled* to do His Will. It means, therefore, a voluntary surrender of your will and an offering of it to Him, and when your will is one with the unchangeable Will of God, the resources of the Infinite are made available for you. That is what faith means; nothing less than that! Of course, people (in most cases, religious people) will seek to discourage you. So many are fondly attached to a morbid deification of pain, especially when someone else is enduring it! They will tell you that what you are reading now is not "common-

* St. John xiv:12.

sense." Well, you are made for something greater than what is called "common-sense"; you are created to possess *divine knowledge*, and that invariably is the opposite to purely human wisdom. Think upon our Lord's appeal to your imagination and your expectation: In faith and by faith all things are made possible, even to the rooting up of mountains. "Fear not: only believe!" Well, His words are either true or false; there is no room for compromise between these positions, for there is no such thing as a "*half-truth*"; and if the words fail for *this* life, then of what consequence are they for the next? Meet the facts and make your decision boldly.

A young priest asked me recently if I felt there were any limits to faith. I replied by telling him of Sir Oliver Lodge's answer when he was asked to express himself as to space, when discussing the Einstein theory. Said this great scientist, "I cannot conceive of space having any limit; at the same time I cannot conceive of space having no limit." Is it not much the same with faith? "*Whatsoever ye ask*"—seemingly no limit. "In My Name"—the limit of His Will. But who shall seek to measure that! Suffice to cherish and use the knowledge that His voice rings down through the centuries to everyone afflicted in body, or sick in soul, who seeks Him: "I will, be thou clean." "Fear not: only believe." For fear destroys faith and faith is only for the brave: people who are willing to reverse the world's principle that we must know to do, by courageously entering into the paradox of *doing to know*.

CHAPTER V

THE MANNER OF HEALING

ONE often marvels that the Christian world ever should have come to attribute physical disease to God, since our dear Saviour most emphatically and directly reveals it as the work of the hosts of evil. If we read the Gospel carefully, we find a revelation of spiritual forces of evil, ranging from the great evil personality of Satan, tempting the souls of men, down to impersonal forces that afflict the body and yet, though impersonal, are subject to a higher will and capable of obeying a command. In the reaction from the grossly exaggerated ideas men had of the devil in the past, which practically endowed him with omniscience and omnipresence, if not omnipotence, people swung to the other extreme and denied his existence altogether. Today we are being compelled to recognize this as a stupendous blunder and psychology, the twentieth century science, is more and more tending in psychical research to confirm belief in a large spiritual population of the world, made up of evil existences as well as good. You will find, too, that some very eminent physicians, who treat nervous and mental diseases, are beginning once more to speak of "possession" instead of "obsession." I have found in many discussions with psycho-analysts that they are simply using new terms for the old expressions the Church has used for centuries, when speaking of mental ills. Then, with the

horrors of the great war still fresh in our minds, can we question any longer the fact of evil spiritual forces existing and inspiring men to wickedness?

Now our Lord revealed evil to us as attacking man in his soul, his mind and his body, and He gave three weapons to His Church with which to combat it: Absolution, Exorcism and Unction. (Unfortunately, largely owing to faithlessness and the abnormal consideration shown to dangerous prejudices, these weapons, for the most part, are but little used in the American Church.) We are concerned now with evil manifested in bodily disease and how to banish it. The Saviour constantly attributes physical ills to the devil; never to God. For example, He tells us that the woman with the spirit of infirmity "Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years," and often in the Gospel, when we read of Him casting out a devil, the reference is not to an evil spirit that tempts the soul. Thus in St. Luke xi:14, we read, "And He was casting out a devil and it was *dumb*." At other times the spirit is one of deafness, or blindness, or epilepsy, or one able to produce curvature of the spine. So when you think of a devil in this connection, dismiss from your mind those absurd visualizations, so many make, of a stage Mephistopheles. The forces of evil may be infinitely small from the standpoint of human measurement. We speak today of *germs*, and some of the worst kinds of germs are invisible under the most powerful glass, but we have no difficulty in appreciating as fact that their number may be legion in any one

person. You remember that very word "Legion" being used in the case of the afflicted, Christ restored in the country of the Gadarenes, "because many devils were entered into him." Now who can tell us anything about the principle of life animating a germ? No one; all we know from men of science is that there are these destructive germs of disease and it would seem quite probable, in physical ills, that we are simply using a new name for an old fact, viz., that evil forces are able, under certain circumstances, to afflict the body, just as we can account rationally for mental epidemics only by the agency of evil forces operating on human minds. We know full well that man can not only spread disease, but bring it about; wickedly inclined, he can infect countless numbers under given circumstances. To admit this and to deny that a spiritual creation prior to man, perverted and fallen, cannot do so, is to take up a position that is scarcely an intellectual one. We ought to prick that bubble once and for all, and help to destroy the conceit that grows out of a poor intellectual pride and the fear of being scorned as superstitious.

I felt bound to touch upon the fringe of this great problem of physical ill because I think it may help you to lay hold on the primitive Christian conception of the authorship of disease, saving you from a divided mind on the subject and helping you to pray with greater confidence to the Father of Him "Who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil." Now, God banishes disease from us if we ask with


faith. He has promised to supply at once all that is needful for the health and sustenance of the body, the soul and the mind. And He gives to us not, as our small pietists (small in mind, but large in number) would have us believe, because we are "good," but because we are in *need*. Only, unfortunately, the average Christian knows so little about prayer and its wonders, that it is not surprising that he places far more trust in a bottle of medicine than he does in God's promises. Not that I am contending that the medicine may not be helpful, but desiring to remind you that most of our modern Christians are far more concerned over missing a regular dose of a drug than missing their prayers. And you know how wrong that is! As a consequence, very few ask for health with expectancy, looking to be raised up *at once* and thanking God, after making the request, because believing already they "*have received.*" I have known cases of instant cure as the result of prayer by people I have been privileged to instruct, but these are rare souls and knowing something of the depths of prayer. But, in the average, faith must be helped, and my experience is that most of us are very dependent upon all the spiritual aid we can obtain.

It is here that the great goodness of God comes to us. Knowing how weak a thing human trust is, He gives us outward visible signs to assure us of the fulfillment of His promises, the psychic value of which, apart from any other consideration, is inestimable. We read in Holy Scripture that He, "when

He had ascended up on high, gave gifts unto men." These gifts are very *real* things, but faith has been so lacking among Christians for so long, that we need to recall constantly today the ringing words of St. Paul, first addressed to the Corinthians: "Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." For most of us are very ignorant of them, even among those who sit in high places in the Church. Now one of those gifts, given to certain individuals born into the world, is the gift of *healing*. This may be possessed by a layman or a priest, and the usual procedure, where one comes in real faith for the ministration of the gift God has given to be ministered, is to lay hands on the sick person's head and in the Name of Jesus impart it. No doubt there are very many today who have that gift, but who are wholly ignorant of it, living, as most Christians do, almost entirely on the outside of things, expecting nothing beyond the rut of conventional religion, with its woeful dependency upon money and the things of the world. Consequently, that gift lies within them dormant, waiting to be stirred up and used, if the imagination ever can be kindled. Hence we hear of but very few who have the gift of healing and, as a result, are apt to unduly exalt them as something more than human.

But *this* gift of healing is not one that we must think of as being given to the Church corporately, or conveyed in the giving of Holy Orders. (The only ones enjoined definitely to "heal the sick," in the Ordinal, are those consecrated Bishops and one

would give much to know what is in the mind of both Consecrators and Consecrated when those words are used today.) However, so great is God's love that He does not confine His operations for our health of body to those who have received a special gift of healing, but has provided for us a means, called Holy Unction, to be ministered by the priests of the Church, whereby we all should have an outward mark and sign of God's covenanted promise to assure us of the healing conveyed and given within. (In the early centuries laymen, and even Sisters of the Church, administered it where a priest could not be obtained, and people quite generally kept the holy oil in their homes.) In the sixth chapter of St. Mark, we learn of our Lord sending forth the Twelve and giving them power over unclean spirits, and read that they "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." Of course it is most improbable that they would have followed this practice of anointing unless they had been so *commanded*, and commissioned by Christ, and when we read the instructions of St. James, that the sick are to send for the priests of the Church that they may anoint them with oil and offer the prayer of faith, we can only reasonably conclude that this is the continuation of the practice begun then. You must be careful not to confuse this with the Roman Catholic Sacrament of Extreme Unction, which has no relation whatsoever to the much earlier Rite of anointing for bodily restoration, and which continued for some centuries after Christ. Indeed, it is more



than likely that always, in *some* parts of the Church, faith in this Unction was never completely lost, even though, through faithlessness and the consequent growth of superstition, which endowed the oil with a sort of magic, it fell into common disuse. But today, thank God, we are beginning to see its recovery and true use, a number of our Bishops consecrating the oil for the sick on each Maundy Thursday, and even some of the Roman Catholic Bishops earnestly advocating the restoration of this primitive rite for the raising of the sick. Now you must not suppose that the oil so consecrated is endowed with any magical property as a result. It is, as we are distinctly told by St. James, "the prayer of faith" that "shall save the sick," even when the anointing is being given. Equally, I think, we must dismiss from our minds, what the Bishop of Vermont suggests in his "Thoughts on 'The Seven Sacraments'," that it may have been "employed as a *medical remedy*." Rather should we see in it the material mark of God's covenant and His pledge to assure the faithful that disease is being banished and health brought in. The same author seems to question its conveying any inward gift: "It is a bodily outward sign of an outward gift from God." But this surely is to forget that God always works from the *inside*. The bodily anointing is not a sort of religious poultice, but blessed in His Name, becomes the *outward pledge of what God is doing within us*. For healing is from within, *not* from without.

This, then, is the light in which you should regard

and accept this Means of Health and not disturb your mind over mere theories. Faith does not ask the *how* of things; it looks forward to and finally rests in *results*. And if you had seen what I have seen, *instant* results after anointing, and claiming the Divine promises, you would at once throw aside all questions and doubts, just as blind Bartimaeus "cast away his garment" in his thankful eagerness to come to Jesus for healing. As it is, you must be prepared to take faith's venture, having had no experience of Holy Unction, and enter the paradox and *do to know*. There is no other way. It is well to reflect, however, on the psychic value to the sick of the bringing of the holy oil and giving the anointing. If in Sacraments for the soul, and many times in His own healing of the sick, our Lord made use of material envelopes and signs, we may feel quite sure that He also employed all psychic means of help. I have seen the sick, on the borderland of unconsciousness, brought back to consciousness by just such things as the preparing of the table for the oil stock or the lighting of a candle. Above all, judging now only from the psychic point of view, the touching with the oil inspires confidence; they feel something extraordinary is being *done*, expectation is increased and they seek within to lay hold upon the gift God has given them. We are all very human and very dependent upon help. In illness we are like tired children, and that which the healthy person, or those lacking in psychic sense, may view as something insignificant, becomes very important and potent when

we are prostrate upon a bed of sickness. Men who have no mystic sense are seriously handicapped in spiritual discernment and knowledge and there are many spiritual Peter Bells:

“In vain, through every changeful year,
Did nature lead him as before,
A primrose by a river’s brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.”

Poetry conveys nothing to such men and spiritual artistry is but a meaningless term. But why be guided by such as these?

Now do not let anybody come and disturb you about the *means* of spiritual healing. Take the advice of those who have seen the mercies of God with their own eyes and they will be guided as to what course to take with and for you after counselling with you. I know, in my own case, I sometimes feel impelled to just lay on my hands in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and I have witnessed great wonders in such cases. But generally these have happened among people of great faith or in times of emergency when and where the holy oil was not to be had. And I have seen the marvels of God wrought in the giving of Holy Unction, and the average person will be guided wisely, I think, in seeking the anointing, providing, of course, that first proper instruction is given by a priest accustomed to minister this Means of bodily health. Take care that you despise not the Means. Remember Naaman! The rivers of

Damascus were far broader and clearer than the Jordan and it all seemed so absurdly insignificant to go and dip seven times in what he regarded as a muddy stream. But only as he *did* the simple thing was he made whole. And God is always asking us to do the simple things, because we are never more like unto Him than when we become simple. "Except . . . ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

CHAPTER VI

THE PREPARATION FOR HEALING

NOW we come to the consideration of the question of spiritual preparation for receiving the ministry of healing. For I hope that what I have said has helped to bring you to the point of making up your mind positively that the Will of God is that we should be well in body as well as in soul. I have tried to show you the reasonableness of belief in this and, I would remind you, I have not been speaking of mere theory, but of what *I know*, through God's goodness, and of that which I have *seen* in ministering to sick persons in over a score of years of priestly life. I ask you to weigh this fact and to read over what I have written more than once. Pray always for the light of the Holy Spirit before reading, and then, expecting His aid, you will find on a second or third perusal that many words, of great meaning for you, and which you may have passed over lightly in your first reading, will stand out big with purpose.

Having made decision, the thought in your mind is: Now what is necessary for me to do in preparing to receive this healing ministry? Well, I think the first thing to keep before you is the need of *strengthening your decision*. At first that is likely to waver, especially if you talk much with people who are wholly ignorant of God's mercies given in this covenanted way, or who may belong to new cults which have made the cure of bodily illness the

sum of the Christian Religion. Unless you have some person, or persons, who possess faith in a very real measure (not mere belief, or faith misdirected in the modern revival of ancient heresies), confident in their trust in our Lord's promises, then I counsel you to keep silence or to talk only with God. For we are all affected by our spiritual and mental environment, and never more so than when we are ill; with our powers of resistance lowered, we are more subject to suggestion. Psychology is teaching us that this suggestion need not be uttered aloud; the mental and spiritual attitude of others will penetrate stone walls. It becomes very important then, as to whom we have around us in illness. If those who are constantly with the sick (these invariably are loved ones, so that the fact of their affection is apt to blind both themselves and the patient to their mental influence) are filled with *fears* and hopelessness, then the sick person is greatly handicapped, having disease to fight, *plus* the psychic weight of mental environment. For many years I have made a point of warning relatives, and friends of people who are ill, to keep away from the sick room and bedside unless they can conquer their fears and grave apprehensions. And great care should be taken in the selection of a nurse, for if, as so often happens, she is scornful of spiritual help for her patient, even to the point of utterance, depending solely and only on purely material things, her influence will militate against the free exercise of faith on the part of the sick one.

Our Lord quite plainly shows us the importance of environment in such cases. You will recall how He sometimes took men "apart from the crowd," away from the disturbed atmosphere that had been caused by misbelief in certain neighborhoods. Again, you will remember that when He went to the house of Jairus, where He found the paid mourners making lamentation and people who laughed Him to scorn when He said, "the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth," the first thing He did was to change the mental atmosphere by *turning out all the scoffers*.^{*} Then with His three disciples, and the parents of the child, all of one mind and purpose, He entered into the room and called back life to the exanimated body. Faith, you see, is the union of our hearts and wills with God's Will and purpose, and where this unity is lacking results are not possible. This is a *very important spiritual law*, to which, in our times, we have been woefully blind. A simple experiment will convince us speedily of the power of mental and spiritual environment to act as a help or a drag; it is, for example, much easier to pray among people of our own Communion than in a mixed assembly, and always very difficult to offer prayers where there is an avowed hostility to God or unbelief in prayer.

Next, nothing will help more to strengthen your decision than spiritual reading and meditation. I strongly advise you to read over the cases of cure wrought by our Lord, as we have them in the Gospel, and then to meditate upon what you have read,

^{*} St. Mark v:35 to end.

always first praying for the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit. These He will surely grant you, and if we feel any lack, then we may be sure that it is due to the fact that *expectation* has not been quickened within us. God is *always giving*, but we do not always receive because of the failure of our faith to reach out and take hold of His gifts. The great difficulty of prayer is not so much one that is found in asking, but in not knowing *how to receive*. Thus, when you are anointed, *He will convey to you, undoubtedly, the blessing of health*, but unless your faith is developed to the point where you can appropriate it, the blessing will lie dormant within you. God will have no spiritual sluggards; we must be co-workers with Him in very truth, and this means constant perseverance and struggle. So read your Bible, and especially the Gospel, a thing, I fear, we lamentably neglect in the present day. I remember some years ago being written to by one who was, if memory serves me right, a member of a commission appointed by the Church to consider the question of restoring to the Prayer Book an Office for the anointing of the sick. Evidently hearing of my experiences in ministration, one of his principal questions was, "What text books do you advise for study?" My reply was, "The Bible, read under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." And *that* is the main thing; all the books, great and small, set forth, can succeed only as they seek to bring their readers to the prayerful study of the Scriptures, and the realization that the promise of the Holy Spirit's guidance will be fulfilled, if we look for it.

There is another important part of your preparation to which serious attention must be given. Often illness is brought about by plain disregard of, or carelessness to observe, the laws of health. If people persist in living under unsanitary conditions, when circumstances do not compel it (sometimes they do, at least for a time; dire poverty drives people into the dark rooms of tenements—*such* a disgrace in a new country like America!—where germs thrive), or are careless in housekeeping to the point of uncleanness, it is not to be supposed that this can continue and God make a short way out from consequent illness through spiritual healing. Sometimes I have been asked to anoint people in homes which were so unclean that the first thing I had to insist upon was a thorough cleansing and a promise that strict attention in the future would be paid to this essential of healthy living. Again, at other times, illness is brought on by failure to recognize the limitations of strength, and endurance under work, which God Himself has set for us. It must be confessed that this is frequently a difficult problem to deal with, especially where illness has been due to the excessive spending of oneself in service for God and man. But we must, I think, reflect at such times on the very real waste of precious time as the result, often enough, of responding to calls that are consciously, or even unconsciously, selfish, at the expense of our health. In the stress and busy rush of present-day life, we should make it our constant prayer that we may be preserved from *wasting* time in the *making of too much haste*.

Then, of course, if it is necessary to write something about house cleaning, which is outside of us, it is even more necessary to emphasize the bounden duty of a moral and spiritual cleansing within. Where the illness is the direct result of the sick person's sin, which is not uncommon, though very far from being the rule, the first thing we are called upon to do is to cast out the sin in confession. In every case I most earnestly urge the need of repentance, as pleasing to God and for the great blessing of the sick person. Naturally, any devout soul, desiring to love God more and to please and glorify Him, will seek this course. Our first consideration in all things, even in asking for the restoration of bodily health, should be the glory of God. Otherwise we may sink into that common but false religion of a sort of sanctified selfishness. And there should be no hesitation in seeking priestly help at such times. In illness, happily, prejudices often give way easily, and the sick person who has to speak of possibly unpleasant things to the doctor, for he must be perfectly frank with him, is made brave to tell out what may be still more unpleasant things to the physician of the soul. If you read over again the fifth chapter of St. James you will note, immediately following his direction as to Holy Unction, that, speaking of the sick person, he adds, "And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." This means, as the true translation of the impersonal verb used in the original, to which Dean Comber called attention, "remission or absolution shall be given him." And

there is, as the Prayer Book teaches us, a specially authorized and appointed ministry for this purpose, the priesthood. The term, "the righteous man," used in verse sixteen of the same chapter, most probably refers to the priest, or especially his holy office. Therefore, I always advise the sick to follow this course, for in absolution strengthening grace is given to the soul that can be had, perhaps, no other way. None the less, I do not *insist* upon it, for we priests of the Anglican Communion must not presume to exceed the rule laid down by the Church to which we have vowed obedience and which leaves decision in this matter to the penitent. Anything in the nature of compulsory confession is greatly to be avoided, or the use of undue persuasion by the priest when the patient is very ill. For where the voluntary principle gives way to coercion, spiritual as well as ethical values suffer. But I advise the thoroughness I have spoken of, that everything may be done to strengthen faith and to cast out fears with the destruction of sin. But be careful to get a *wise* priest, as well for the soul as the body. This is not determined altogether by age or experience, but by the gift of the Holy Spirit to the more spiritual among the clergy.

Lastly, *cultivate a thankful spirit by charitable acts*. I have sometimes anointed people who had been helplessly crippled or hopelessly ill (as we commonly use these terms), and they have progressed to a certain point and there the recovery has ceased. And, I think, without exception, these have been niggardly people, afraid to give. It is not that the